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WELSH MUSIC.—No. XIV.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CAMBRO-BRITON.

SIR,—“*Mentra Gwen*,” *Venture Gwen*, is a peculiarly elegant melody, and possesses much originality; though the last eight bars are very similar to “The Melody of North Wales.” Yet the commencement is strikingly novel. The words, adapted to it by Mr. J. Jones, are very appropriate; it is a serenade called “Ellen Dear.” The note, which accompanies it, may amuse those who are strangers to the ancient customs of the Cymry; I shall therefore transcribe it:—

“Serenading used to be very prevalent in Wales formerly. There is still a curious custom on May-day morning, when the swains deck a bough of rosemary with white ribbands, &c. and place it at the chamber-window of the fair ones whom they admire. But a different present is left at the doors of those, whom they are not on friendly terms with: a *penglog*, i. e. a horse’s head, is procured from a tan-yard, and made fast to the latch, to the no small annoyance, and even disgrace, of the nymphs, who are anxiously looking out for the “Garland of Love.”

“*Meillionen*,” *The Trefoil*, but better known as Sir Watkin’s Delight, follows *Mentra Gwen*, with words adapted to it by one, of whom I could say much, were I addressing any other person but the author of “The Heroes of Cymru,” which appeared in No. 14 of the CAMBRO-BRITON.

“*Wyses Ned Pugh*,” *Ned Pughe’s Grand-daughter*, is a favourite air, with the pennillion-singers; the metre is similar to that of *Llwyn Onn*. “The Exile of Cambria,” written by a lady expressly for this work, is a song calculated to warm the *calonau* of the Cymry, when distant from the “Hills of their Fathers.”

“*Rheged*”—Query—whether *Reged*, or *Rheged*, the Welsh for liberality, bounty, &c. &c. or *Urien Rheged*, a distinguished chieftain who flourished about the latter part of the fifth century. The melody is a most elegant, flowing composition, and, if it be very ancient, it certainly bespeaks more refinement and feeling than are generally attributed to a rude people; such as

some authors would fain make us believe our forefathers were.

“Tri chant o Bumau,”—*Three Hundred Pounds*. This bold and energetic air was noticed in my seventh letter, (vol. i. p. 416) and is merely mentioned here, because the fine song of the “Hirlas Horn,” written by Mrs. Hemans, was inserted in the last Number* of the CAMBRO-BRITON, as adapted to this melody.

“Rhyvelgyreh Gwyr Harlech,”—*The March of the Men of Harlech*. This fine and characteristic air has also been noticed in vol. i. p. 95. The subject of the words, adapted to it, is “The Death of Llywelyn,” written by the author of the “Heroes of Cymru,” who, I hope, will gratify your readers by inserting the poem in the CAMBRO-BRITON.

Very few can conceive the difficulty there is in writing English words to some of the Welsh Melodies; the tune must be altered, the irregularity of the rhythm and metre must be attended to, and, above all, the character of the composition must be preserved, or my countrymen will not be satisfied.

In reviewing the Second Number of the Welsh Melodies, one of the papers observes, “Among the sixteen airs which this publication contains, besides four harmonized, there are several of a striking character, and several very pretty, which will afford delight to players. Others have an oddness of measure, which must have rendered writing to them a very difficult task, so abrupt, as apparently to defy melody,—and so quaint, as to *bother* rhythm worse than if they had been *Irish*.” All this is very gratifying to us Cambrians; we like the oddness and quaintness of our national airs. What *Cymro* would allow his “*Noble Race of Shenkin*” to be considered second to any composition of the kind; or, would have his “*Hob y deri*” yield to the most scientific of the Italian Buffas? The Welsh music seems wedded to the language—and they certainly agree, considering the length of time they have been united, far better than most married folk now-a-days!

I have endeavoured to procure words for the different airs, written in close imitation of the Welsh songs and *Pennillion*; how far I have succeeded I will leave to those who love the songs of olden times to decide, most earnestly inviting them to

* No. 25.—ED.

join me in wishing that the language, music, and customs of the ancient Cymry may never die.

"Oes y byd i'r Iaith Gymraeg."

I am, Sir, your obedient Servant,

Newman Street,

JOHN PARRY.

Jan. 17, 1822.

EXCURSION IN NORTH WALES.

[*Concluded.*]

BEFORE we retired to rest at Corwen, we enquired at what time the coach would arrive; and, finding it did not go direct to Carnarvon, we determined to *post* thither, and accordingly ordered a chaise to be ready by nine the next morning. Having been apprised that we should find ample occupation for our time after our arrival at the capital, we resolved to make no more tarryings on the road, although we might have done so with advantage, and (for our post-boys were incorrigibly lazy and our horses intolerably tardy) about two o'clock on the day, that followed the one on which we left Corwen, we found ourselves at the door of the Royal Hotel, at Carnarvon, and shortly afterwards in very comfortable apartments, at that most respectable and commodious inn.

Having arranged ourselves in garments somewhat more seemly than our brown and dusty travelling habiliments, we strolled out towards the residence of my old and esteemed friend, Mr. G. We soon arrived at the house, but did not find him at home; his lady, however, welcomed us with as much cordiality as her lord could have done, and gave us to understand, that she had been expecting us for some days. We did not wait long before our host himself arrived; and, as many long years had elapsed since we had seen each other, with what hearty joy he shook us by the hand may be better imagined than described.

O qui complexus et gaudia quanta fuerunt!

"My dear Jane," said he to his better half, "my old friends will of course dine with us to-day; we will make no strangers of them, and, while you are making the necessary arrange-